Advancing The Paper Negative Experiment
(Using a 120 Roll Film Camera)

By James R. Kyle, Photographer

For the past six years I have experimented with the use of paper negatives and their use in Large Format cameras - (i.e.= 3.25 X 4.25 inch // 4 X 5 inch // and 8 X 10 inch). I have wondered, what if I try to "roll" the paper onto a 120 film spool (medium format) camera? Here, within these pages, I write of my successful attempt in doing just that. You may have a better way - and I hope that you will try this and perhaps improve on my way.

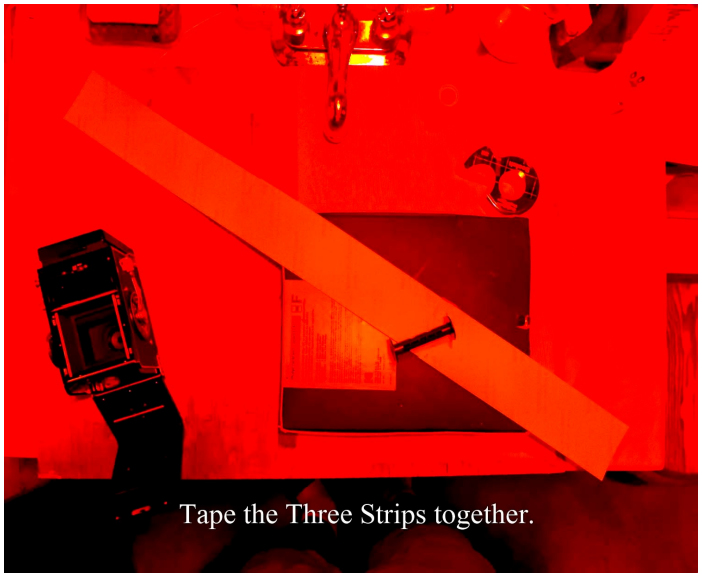
First I measured the width of the spool that I had from a roll of 120 Kodak Tri-X film. Next I set a mark on the paper cutter to make sure that I would see it when using the darkroom safe lights. The camera that was to be used was a 1959 Minolta "Autocoid" twelve exposure double lens reflex. After the cutting of a single weight, Resin Coated Kodak Polycontrast IV RC (my rating of 6 ISO) - I needed to find just how much paper I would need to produce, 12 images in the camera. And the length of the "leader" for the Beginning of the roll, so it would line up correctly on the Image Plane area when the frame counter reached 12. (I did NOT have to really worry about the end, as it would just "unload" to the other spool - And in that I was loading and unloading in the darkroom environment = No Black Paper Backing, so NO Loading and unloading in the field.)

At this point of your reading I wish to make mention that it would have been easier to have kept the Black Paper Backer that the film came in, to get the correct measurements of the 12 exposure film roll. Please do that to save repeated tries on getting it correct. Measure the length. Mark the Beginning and the End of where the Film was attached to the paper backing. Mark where the "ARROWS" (or lines) are to Begin the advancement of the roll to STOP at the first "frame" of the Paper Negatives.

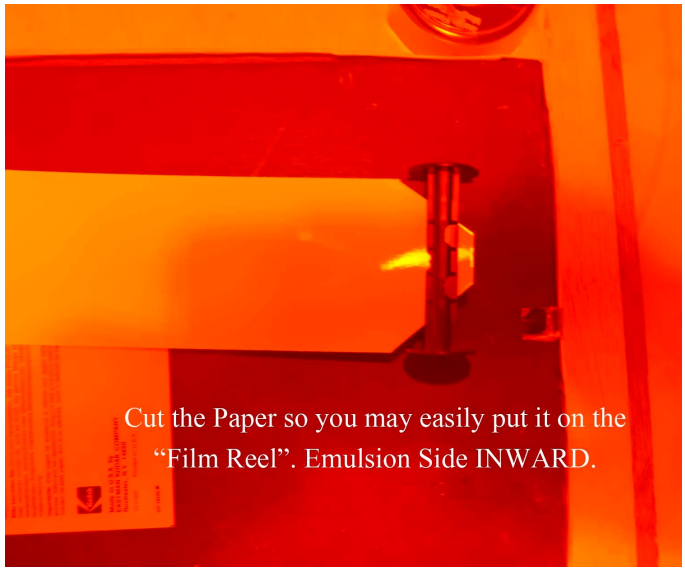
I suggest that the use of only Resin Coated Paper be used. One reason is that, if the paper would get a little moisture within the camera body, the Emulation may stick to the rolled paper. The other reason is that the resistance to becoming scratched is much less, if at all when rolled up tightly on a spool. Single Weight is what I used as I wanted to have less of a "spring-back effect" - and thus - bind-up with in the camera body.

Here, on page 2, are the photographs of how I proceeded with this experiment.

Cut a 8X10 sheet of Photo Paper into Three Strips.
(NOTE > After cutting ti size, you will have about 1/2 Inch of Waste. That is about 16mm Use or Disregard.)

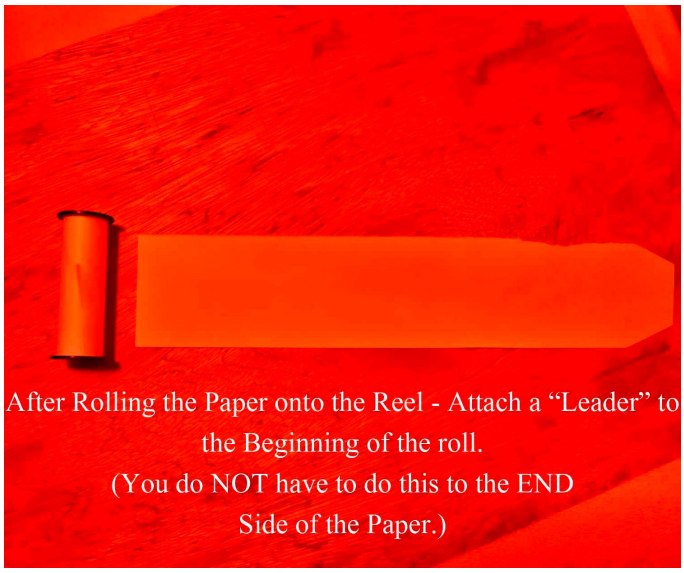


Tape the Three Strips together.

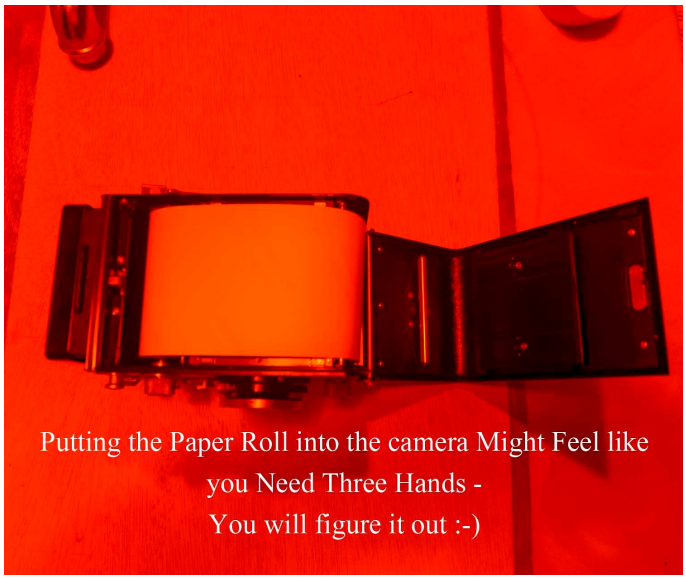


Cut the Paper so you may easily put it on the "Film Reel". Emulsion Side INWARD.

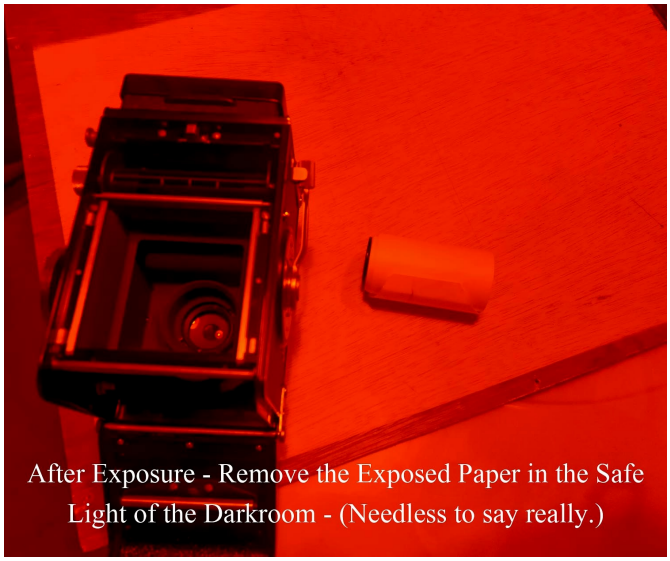
Wrap the Paper Very Tight onto the "Film Reel"
(Try NOT to touch the Emulsion side - Best to use Gloves.)



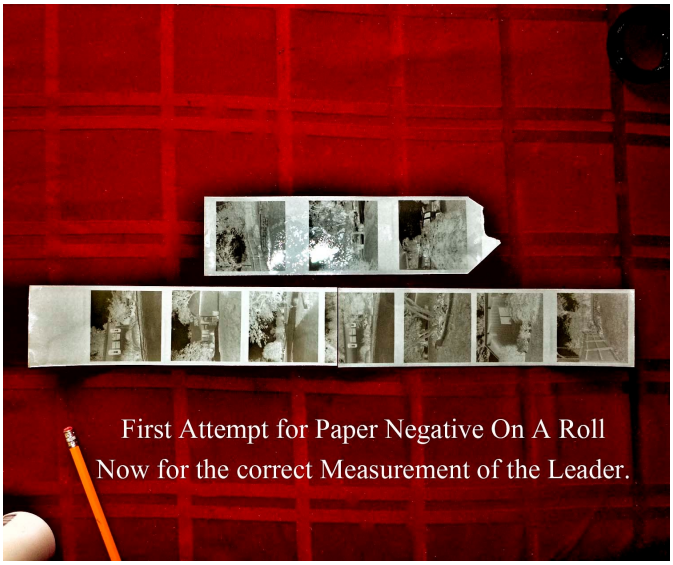
After Rolling the Paper onto the Reel - Attach a "Leader" to the Beginning of the roll.
(You do NOT have to do this to the END Side of the Paper.)



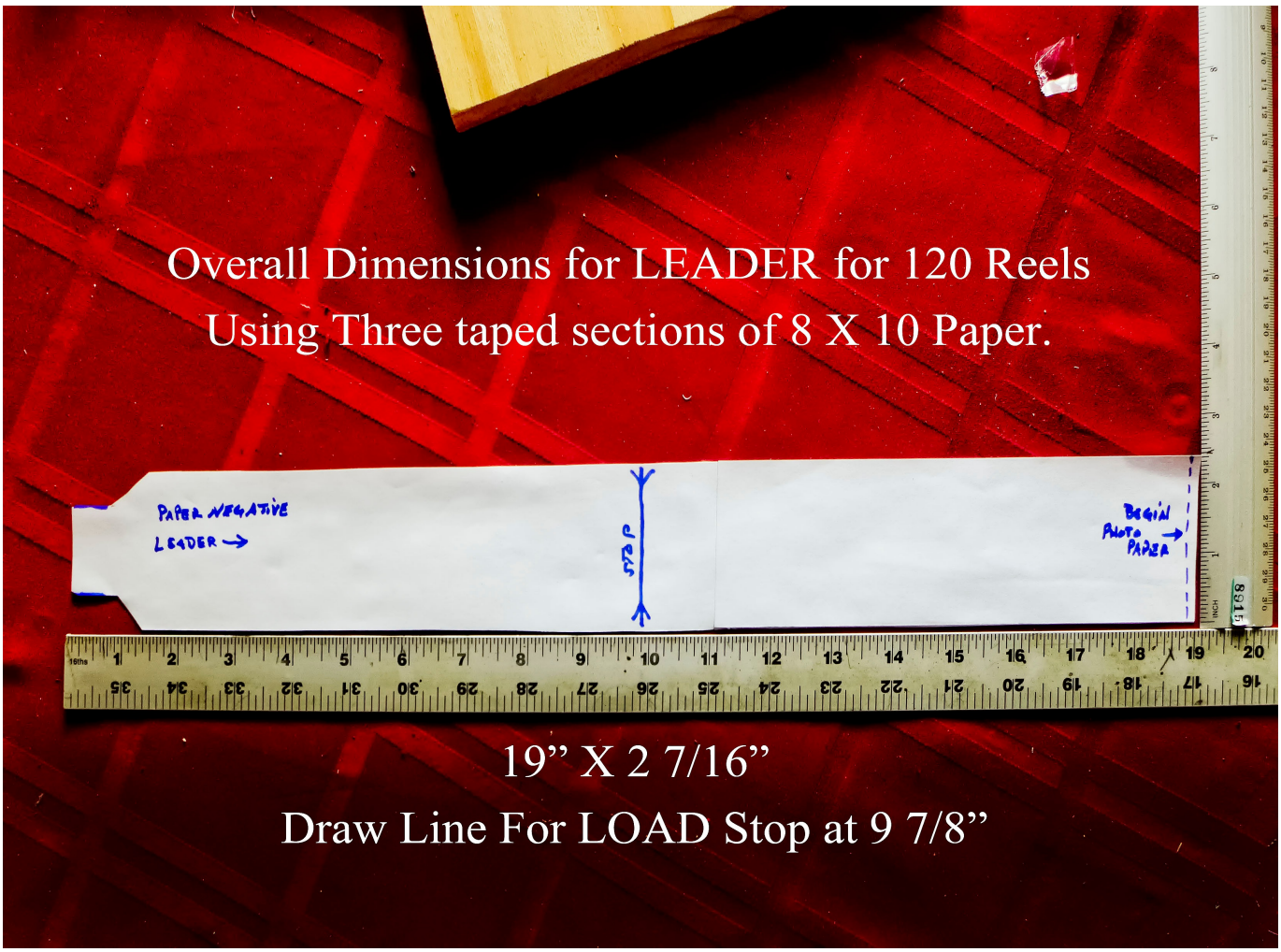
Putting the Paper Roll into the camera Might Feel like you Need Three Hands -
You will figure it out :-)



After Exposure - Remove the Exposed Paper in the Safe Light of the Darkroom - (Needless to say really.)



First Attempt for Paper Negative On A Roll
Now for the correct Measurement of the Leader.



For the development of these ten images - I took off the tape from the backside of each of the three sections of the paper roll. Developed the regular way in the trays were I develop all of my Paper Negatives, and with the same chemicals used.

This was a fun project and I did prove one local photographer friend wrong = That One Can, Indeed, Make Paper Negative with Rolling the Paper up on a 120 film spool, and have it successfully produce images in Medium Format. And Not (like a pin hole camera) keep running in and out of the darkroom to change a single loading and unloading.

NOTE =

After unrolling the paper - separate the sections for easy development. I shall now concentrate on where the divisions are between the sections of the matched paper sections. This will make the frames even and better to scan. This shall take trial and error - perhaps many errors.

Also = There will be a little leftover ends of the paper, about one inch total from cutting to size for the 120 paper “film”. You may want to keep these in a separate light proof containment for other “little” experiments.

As always – Have Fun, Learn, And Help Others With Your Experiments with Paper Negatives.

Photo By My Friend, and fellow Photographer, Mark Gettemeyer

James R. Kyle, Saint Louis, Missouri - May 24th, 2019